SONG.

BY HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

She is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be,
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smil'd on me;
Oh! then, I saw her eye was bright
A well of love, a spring of light.

But now her looks are coy and cold
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye:
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

The New-York Tribune.

SUNDAY, JULY 21, 1907.

An interesting question of literary morality has been raised by the recent publication of Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt's "Secret History of the Occupation of Egypt." He has been taken to task for publishing old letters and conversations of public men who are still living, and he has sent to "The Athenæum" a long defence of his course. "The only question to determine," he maintains, "is at what precise point the necessities of current politics, which admit of lying, end, and History, which demands truth and truth only, may begin to say her word. Is it to be after one hundred or fifty or after what lesser number of years, or generally after the death of all concerned, or, again, when no one living can seriously be injured?" He explains that much historical and biographical matter has been published without establishing the truth as to Egyptian matters and that, believing his knowledge on the subject to be of value, he decided to publish "as one decides on calling out to a traveller taking a wrong road." He points out that if he had asked permission to publish the letters and remarks of certain personages still living "the conventions of diplomacy and official life would have certainly obliged all these old friends to say 'No.'" Yet Mr. Blunt leaves the question just where he found it.

When "The Monthly Review" sank beneath the western pines the other day it attracted attention by printing, as a kind of farewell to criticism, an excessively tart essay on the novels of Thomas Hardy. The author of this production, Mr. Lindsay Garrett, has duly been taken to task for his impertinence, but this is small comfort to some commentators. They agonize over the wickedness of talking about Mr. Hardy as though he were an ordinary mortal. Well, we dare say that Mr. Hardy will survive the animadversions of Mr. Lindsay Garrett. Moreover, this episode involves a point which is too little considered and on which current opinion might well be revised. No critic worth his salt can fail in reverence for a genuine master of literature, but no critic is worth his salt who swallows whole whatever such a master chooses to give him, whether good or bad. That, however, is just what is done to an extraordinary extent to-day. If George Meredith chooses to say something in print on a subject of public interest, fidelity to his novels causes his readers to receive it as though it were a sublime revelation. To these readers some uninteresting pronouncement of Mr. Swinburne's appears to be freighted with all of the magic of his early poems. This sort of thing is bad enough when writers of eminence are concerned. It is perhaps an amiable failing to always take them seriously. But the droll thing is that the same misplaced confidence is exhibited with reference to almost any living writer who has once acquired a reputation. That reputation is supposed to act automatically, investing with a certain sanctity everything that the owner of it does. Respect for good work done in the past paralyzes criticism, and bad work done in the present is treated with excessive good nature.

Some time ago Mr. Lang remarked that all poets, except Coleridge, agreed that the Homeric poems were by one man, and he added that "in a matter of their own business" the opinion of poets carries weight, as against that of professors. Now, Professor Burrows, in his book on the excavations in Crete, takes up the argument against Mr. Lang, and attempts to fortify his opinion with one expressed by Mr. Alfred Austin to the effect that Shakespeare himself could not turn a given piece of prose into poetry. Whereupon Mr. Lang counters with this pointed little note:

> Now, Shakespeare "did more, *he did it*," to quote an elegant writer. He turned the prose of North's translation of Plutarch into the poetry of his Roman plays. Mr. Swinburne, also, turned the prose of a letter attributed to Queen Mary into poetry, in his tragedy, "Bothwell."

Mr. Burrows's argument appears to be that if Mr. Austin erred in a point of criticism, the unanimous opinion of all poets, including Goethe and Mr. Matthew Arnold, on another point of criticism is of no value. But perhaps Mr. G. B. Shaw may give another turn to the discussion by averring that Shakespeare's poetry derived from North's prose is not poetry at all, but versified fustian. Then Goethe's opinion would, of course, go for nothing. For my part, I side with the poets. Coleridge and Wordsworth did prose notes, by Dorothy Wordsworth, into excellent poetry, which looks awkward for Mr. Austin's theory.

All of which goes to show that it is dangerous to prophesy unless you know. What makes this incident the more amusing is that any one should drag in Mr. Alfred Austin with the idea of confuting Mr. Lang in a matter of poetry. Mr. Lang is a poet himself.

STORIES OF DUBLIN.

The Early Days of a Mediæval Town.

THE STORY OF DUBLIN. By D. A. Chart, M. A. Illustrated by Henry J. Howard. Mediæval Town Series. 16mo, pp. 368. The Macmillan Company.

To those who need to be reminded that Dublin is not only the prosperous centre of Ireland's modern life but a town of the Middle Ages, full of dramatic history, this little book comes as an engaging guest. Written with equal care and animation it is one of the most attractive volumes of a valuable series. It is in a measure, of course, the history of Ireland herself.

Dublin's name, bestowed two thousand years ago, means in Gaelic "the black pool," for dark then as now were the waters of the Liffey on which the ancient settlement arose. The first mention of the place in history, about the year 150 A. D., introduces at once the atmosphere of contention and sorrow. It was at that time that King "Conn of the Hundred Battles" lost in war to a rival a large part of his dominions, the line of demarkation being drawn across the country from High street, Dublin, to the Atlantic Ocean in Galway. This division led to renewed quarrels. We catch a brighter glimpse of the town in a legend whose period is set three hundred years later, when St. Patrick is represented as causing a fountain of pure water to well up at the doors of those who complained of the bad marsh water they had to drink. From the beginning of the ninth century the story of Dublin is one of more or less tragedy. The plundering Danes sailed up the Liffey and made over and over their cruel raids; and at last they planted a colony and built a fortress at Dublin. Thorkils, their leader in the year 840, determined to conquer the whole of Ireland, and might have succeeded in doing so if it had not been for Dan Cupid.

He fell in love with an Irish maiden, the Princess of Meath, and went with a group of unarmed attendants to meet her on an island in Lough Owel. The lady duly arrived with a small company of handmaidens, sturdy persons who, under their feminine garments, turned out to be energetic young Irishmen armed with daggers. They made short work of the Viking's companions, and he himself was drowned in the lake by order of the King of Meath, his sweetheart's father. The foreigners were driven out of Dublin, but they came back again and again until, at the battle of Clontarf, in 1014, their power was finally broken. Those who remained were converted to Christianity and by the middle of the twelfth century Dublin had become the chief town in Ireland, and was reasonably comfortable to live in as towns of that century went. Then came the Norman invasion, the beginning of British rule in Ireland. It was brought about by an Irishman, the brutal King of Leinster, Dermot MacMurrough. Wicked and tyrannical beyond words, he called down upon himself the wrath of all the other Irish princes and was forced to fly to England. King Henry II refused to help the Irishman's plan of revenge, but he allowed some of his barons to do so. They were led by the poverty-stricken Earl of Pembroke, nicknamed Strongbow, who married Dermot's daughter Eva; and the two men made, it is said, "a trembling sod" of Ireland. Two years after King Henry himself appeared on the scene, and thus Ireland passed under the rule of England.

Strongbow was viceroy for a few years, until he died, in Dublin, the seat of the government. He founded Christ Church Cathedral, now the most ancient building in the city. He lies buried under one of its arches, and his monument recalls one of the dark deeds of Dublin history. The earl's son, "a high spirited lad, but still too young for war," says the author, "had obtained from his father the command of a troop of cavalry in some expedition. When battle was joined the boy, rash and inexperienced, was overwhelmed by masses of hostile Irishmen and disgraced his ancestry by a wild, panic-stricken flight. Strongbow, in ungovernable fury, plunged his sword into the body of his child. The tomb in Christ Church commemorates the tragedy. Father and son lie side by side, the former at full, the latter at half length. The youth has his hands pressed over a gaping wound in his stomach. The subject is a singular one for a sculptor. Possibly Strongbow died penitent for his 'most unnatural murder' and took this method of confessing his guilt and repentance to succeeding generations, or it may be that the monks of Christ Church themselves ordered the sin to be recorded permanently as a warning to all those inclined to offend in the like way." This cathedral was in the fifteenth century the scene of a picturesque episode. Hoisted on the shoulders of a tall believer in right divine a glib-tongued boy, who claimed to be the son of Edward IV's brother and rightful heir to the British throne, was crowned as King Edward VI. The viceroy and the Dubliners accepted him with enthusiasm, and not until this plausible young gentleman had reigned for a year in the capital did he fall into the hands of Henry VII—no longer as Edward VI, but the little impostor, Lambert Simnel. Not all personages who roused the wrath of kings in those days were so fortunate in their fate as was this boy. Instead of having his head cut off, he was incontinently relegated to the royal kitchen, there to scrub floors and wash greasy pots and pans.

Strafford, that most unhappy and devoted servant of Charles I, shook up the dry bones of Dublin when he came over as viceroy, intent on gathering funds for his master. He snapped his fingers at the ancient rights of the city, flouted the corporation, and sent protesting officials to prison, releasing them only on payment of fines of prodigious size. It is remembered that only one Irish noble defied him, refusing to obey the order to attend unarmed the Parliament in Dublin. Give up his sword to Black Rod, quoth the young Marquis of Ormond—not he! The man should have it thrust through his body if he liked. The angry boy made a good defence, face to face with the equally angry Strafford. He was summoned to Parliament as a "belted earl," he declared, one "girt with a sword"—why then discard the sword? The viceroy took a fancy to the lordly young fellow and accepted the plea. One of the few pleasant features of Strafford's imperious rule was the establishment of the first city theatre in Dublin. Four years after Strafford left Ireland Ormond became viceroy, and, after the Cromwellian interval, he was appointed to the office again by Charles II. That extraordinary adventurer, Colonel Blood, came very near to putting an end to the duke in London shortly before he returned to Ireland. Stopping Ormond's coach and dragging him out, he prepared to hang him next morning at Tyburn, giving London the treat of seeing "better company at Tyburn Tree" than usually swung there. The interval between capture and proposed execution gave the duke's servants a chance to rescue him. The liveliest Dublin story of the next reign shows James II arriving a breathless fugitive—the first of all his army—at the gates of his loyal town of Dublin, after the fight along the Boyne. He is said to have shunted the blame of the disaster to the shoulders of his troops. "The wretched Irish ran," he complained. "Yes," said a keen-witted Irish lady, "but apparently your majesty ran faster."

It was in the reign of William III that bitter feeling between England and Ireland grew intense, and it has existed ever since. But all the commercial restrictions imposed by the British Parliament were unable to stop the prosperous growth of Dublin. In the eighteenth century the Irish nobles flocked into the city, built themselves magnificent houses and lived in great luxury and splendor. Many of them were as reckless as they were extravagant, and there still are told true and brutal stories of the fashion in which these rakes often replaced the fortunes lost in gambling. A light of the Hellfire Club thus rendered penniless would kidnap an heiress, carry her off to a wild nook in the mountains and compel her to marry him. Mr. Chart notes that the culprit's family connections usually secured him against any serious punishment; as a rule he came off scot free, with a second fortune to squander as he pleased. We are told that this practice of abduction was not stopped until a man of title was sentenced to death for the outrage. The penalty was not in the end inflicted, but he suffered something worse than death—he was sent to a convict settlement to serve his term with thieves and murderers. The reader of Thackeray's "Barry Lyndon" may remember a certain spirited description therein of a Dublin abduction. It was as often a thing of ruffianly force as of sly contrivance. Into one of the handsome mansions in a fashionable street, for example, eight or nine armed men broke one dark night. It was the home of Lady Netterville and the young heiress, her granddaughter, was seized by them and carried away. And there was no redress. The founder of the Hellfire Club is said to have been the first Earl of Rosse, a most wayward and frolicsome scamp.

The shadow of death, which sobers most men, could not damp the spirits of this mocker. The good vicar of the neighboring church of St. Ann's, hoping for even a deathbed repentance, wrote to Lord Rosse, detailing the manifold offences with which he was charged by popular report and exhorting him to contrition and confession. Rosse read the letter and at once ordered it to be sealed and placed in another envelope, addressed to the blameless Earl of Kildare. The vicar's messenger was then bribed to leave the missive at the earl's house, saying it had come from his master. Kildare was scandalized at being charged with such enormities. He complained to the archbishop, who sent for the vicar and asked him how he dared accuse an upright nobleman of such crimes. The vicar, still ignorant of the trick, maintained the truth of what he had written. Kildare served a citation for libel on the clergyman before the real state of things was discovered. In the mean time Rosse had died, enjoying to his last breath the confusion he had created.

STRAFFORD.
(From the portrait by Van Dyck.)

A QUEER ARGUMENT.

From The London Academy.

It is often urged that eloquence and affectation are inalienable, but I maintain that the peculiar pronunciation of certain words—if that constitutes affectation—is a pardonable fault, of which many eminent orators are themselves guilty. In vast cathedrals and large halls where the acoustic properties are of an unusual order it is clearly manifest that some pronunciations are preferable to others, for some words by the very composition of their syllables are not so far reaching in their sound as others, so that if a ruse is adopted to gain the desired effect, surely it is detrimental to no one.

THROUGH THE WOOD.

BY E. NESBIT.

Through the wood, the green wood, the wet wood, the light wood.
Love and I went maying a thousand lives ago;
Shafts of golden sunlight had made a golden bright wood
In my heart reflected, because I loved you so.

Through the wood, the chill wood, the brown wood, the bare wood.
I alone went lonely, no later than last year.
What had thinned the branches, and wrecked my dear and fair wood,
Killed the pale, wild roses and left the rose thorns sere?

Through the wood, the dead wood, the sad wood, the lone wood.
Winds of winter shiver through lichens old and gray.
You ride past forgetting the wood that was our own wood.
All our own—and withered as ever a flower of May.